

THE SUFI ORDERS IN CHINA

Dr. Mozafar Bakhtyar

I have discussed detailed history of development of Islam in China by Iranians in the introduction of the *Survey of Islamic Manuscripts in China*.¹⁵⁰ Causes of spread of Persian as a formal and cultural language of Islam and the influence of Iranians on Islamic culture of China is explained with reference to Chinese, Arabic, Persian and other relevant sources. It is concluded that most of the customs and traditions of Chinese Muslims are under, intense influence of Iranian culture. The text book and prevalent versions common among the Chinese Muslims were written, in Persian language, MuÁammad Ibn i Àakâm Zininâ, a famous Muslim scholar and founder of Islamic school of the Shandong Islamic traditional education in his popular book *Minbj al-ñalab*, compiled in 1660, the most common educational text in Islamic institutions of China uptill now, has supported the same view:

In China most of the texts of *Fiqh*, *TaÁamuvf* and *Tafsár* art written in Persian and a scholar of fiqh, in order to understand the religious texts, has no other choice than to lean Persian properly, because if a problem arises in connection with religious matters which requires a *fatw* (legal opinion/encyclical), how can lie cope with it if he does n6t know Persian properly”.¹⁵¹

As mentioned in my *Survey of Islamic Manuscripts in China*, Persian manuscripts are not comparable with Arabic manuscripts as they are more in number. Due to prevalence of Persian language among Muslims all over China, a large number of words and religious terminology as saying of intention for daily canonical five prayers, for other occasions and rites such

¹⁵⁰ Bakhtvar Mozafar, *China, World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*, Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, 1994, Vol IV, pp. 61-116

¹⁵¹ *Minbj al-ñalab*, Linxia, 1309/1892, pp. 136-7.

as festivals and wedding ceremonies were used to be recited in Persian as a tradition even by those who did not know Persian.¹⁵²

Moreover, numerous Persian cultural and social terms such as names of foods, wearing, things of daily use and some verbs in colloquial language of Muslims in China, are used in Persian language even in the centres of pure Chinese culture as Shandong, Yunnan, Fujian, Sichuan, Zhejiang and Jiangsu.

Uyghuri language which is the most commonly spoken by the Muslim inhabitants of the vast area of Xinjiang (Sinkiang) includes about sixty percent of pure Persian words in its diction and structure. Ms. N. Bad'i, an Iranian scholar and expert in Uyghuri language has accumulated Persian loan words in Uyghuri language and the work is ready to be published.

According to the research of Chinese linguist, Professor Huang Shizhiang, it is worth mentioning that the term Huihui meant for the Muslim in China.¹⁵³ Similarly in the historical documents and archives the term Huihui was used for Persian speaking people and the Persian language in the old Chinese, but due to the distinctive features of Muslims of speaking Persian the word adopted the sense of Muslim for itself.

The history of influence and development of Iranian culture and cultural exchanges begins far-before the Islamic period which is out of discussion here. In the Islamic period besides theology and Sufism which was established and developed by Iranian, economic and commercial elements along with political relations turned into the main factors for the development of Persian language and Culture in China. Similarly in the Hanglin (Imperial Academy), established for the education and training of high ranking government officials only, Persian was formal medium of instruction.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Some of the Persian sayings of intentions for prayers and other religious occasions are described in in the book: *Kitab i Zashiya* (Zakua), Uruun(li (China), 1960

¹⁵³ Huang Shijian, *Xiandai Hanyi zhong de Yilangyu jieci chu tan*, *Yilangxue zai Zhongguo hunwen ji*, Peking University Press, 1993, pp 29-38.

¹⁵⁴ Bakhtvar M., Estifi, *Papers on Iranian Studies in China*, Peking University Press, 1993, pp 44 - 50. I luozhe Gaiyesuding, *Shahalu qianshi Zhongguo ji*, He Gao vi, Zhonghua Press,

According to the world tourists of olden ages like Odoric, Marco Polo, Jean de Plan Carpin and Ibn-i BaÇëÇa, Persian language had the role of mediation among the people of multiple languages and served as an international language in all the territories of Silk Road in China domain.¹⁵⁵ Accordingly missionary tourists who were deputed to China for a number of years alternately in the period of Yuan dynasty (1276-1368 AD) mention in their travelogues that the people knew Persian language well. The letter of the Emperor of China to Pope in Persian language and script was preserved in the National library Paris and has been introduced and published by the well-known Sinolog Paul Pelliot.¹⁵⁶

In this way Sufism based on the prominent and distinguished manifestation of rich Iranian culture spread all over China to teach theoretical Sufism Persian language and gnostic texts of Persian.

There is no need to probe into the old ages of Chinese Turkistan, the most extensive and vast province of China newly named as Xinjiang which was once, one of the most important centres of Iranian Sufism in the past.

Even in important and reliable sources of history of Sufism like *Nafabat al-Ums*¹⁵⁷ Turkistan School has its identity and Kashghar the old capital of that even now exists, as an Islamic cultural centre was once an important school of real Sufism clue to the settlement of numerous Shaikhs of Naqshbandi sect. Monuments of ancient times like the magnificent Khanqah (monastery) of yf«q-Khw«ja with its glorious traditions in Kashghar and Shrine of Rashid al-Din still exist in Kuqa town.

A big, Dostkami (a large howl or vessel for drinks) due to its Persian script engraved around it had been endowed to monastery of Ghazz«lâ by

Beijing, 1981, p 119. Huang Shijian, *The Persian language in China during the Yuan dynasty, Papers on Far Eastern History* 34, Canberra, 1985, pp 84-89.

¹⁵⁵ For more details see: Igor de Rachewitz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans*, London, 1971. Mazaheri A., *La Route de la Soie*, Paris, 1983, p. 24.

¹⁵⁶ Pelliot Paul, *Les Mongols et la Papauté*, *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 22 (1922-23), pp. 1-28

¹⁵⁷ 'Abd A-Ra'âm«n J«mâ, *Nafabat al-Ums*, Tehran, 1373, p 388

the Sufis of Khotan city is preserved in the local museum of Khotan. According to Iranian traditions, these vessels or scoops were used in banquets, Sufi's gatherings, ceremonies or other religious rites to serve water and drinks. Diametre of copper made big Dostkami of Khotan engraved and carved very skilfully is about two meters, but it is not certain why had not been sent to its original destination, Iran. Certainly to carry away so heavy consignments to such a long distance by old transport vehicles was difficult and extra ordinary.

There is a large number of monuments and remains of ancient ruined shrines and Khanqahs all over China. Most of the monuments have specifications and characteristics of pure Iranian architecture, but due to ignorance have been introduced recently only as mosque or tomb even in the historical guide books and archives of China, which seduces the ignorance of history and culture. Regretfully most of the monuments which are incarnate documents of historical influence of Islam and Iranian art and culture in China, are at cornice of destruction due to lack of maintenance and protection. For example, the shrine and Khanqah of Shaikh Abë Isá«q i Walâ in Yarkand (the city named as Sache now-a-days). Since 1.991-93 the years of my earlier visits to these dignified ruins up till now, I found these monument more desolated and more destroyed in every visit. Now while I am writing kilometres away from these ruins in Tehran, Iran. These distinguished and glorified monuments which were the samples of architectural style, fine art and cultural heritage of Iran and Islam in China would have been destroyed completely.

Of course only these remaining monuments are not sign and indication of active and strong flow of Iranian Sufism in China. It must be kept in mind that most of the monuments in Islamic historical buildings in China, besides depreciation, accidents and natural calamities like earthquake of 1900 A.D. in the areas of Kashghar that ruined of many historical buildings, wars and internal and religious disputes became important and effective factors of desolation of numerous Islamic monuments. Uzbeks destroyed many shrines and buildings of Shâ'a sect in Chinese Turkistan to retalliate the Safavides. Czarist Russia annihilated many historical relics to wipe out cultural and historical heritage of region during their rule in Turkistan.

Last important factor was the Cultural Revolution of China in the years 1966-1976 in which not only archives, books and Islamic historical monuments but an important portion of cultural heritage of China disappeared totally.

Besides shrines and tombs of great Sufis which are seen from the east to the west corner of China are markable signs of Islamic and Iranian Sufism in China still. In Canton, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shandong, Sichuan and Fujian, particularly in Quanzliou city (Fujian Province), named as "Zaytun"¹⁵⁸ in Islamic sources, there are numerous grave stones and ruins of tombs of several gnosts of different Sufi sects.¹⁵⁹

Grave of a Shazeli leader that I visited in an old graveyard of Muslims in suburbs of Canton (Guandong) city is an exceptional example in the graves of non-Iranian Sufis of different sects in China. In Yanzhou city (Zhejiang Province in the south-east of China) dignified tomb of Khw«ja Bah« al-Dân, situated in the core of Chinese culture, is still a place to visit and to perform pilgrimage. On the four walls of original tomb a Rub«â (quatrain) of ‘Umar Khayy«m the great Iranian poet has been inscripted and a hemistich is carved on an epigraph on all the four walls. Present condition of the tomb and building shows that there had been a shrine adjacent to it which has disappeared now. It has also been introduced as a tomb and a grave of a religious leader but the titles and headings about the Shaikhs and an epigraph written on the door and a Rub«â (quartain) of ‘Umar Khayy«m clearly shows that it is the grave of a Sufi not a religious leader. Muslims and Budhists also perform pilgrimage, resort and pray there till now.

In south eastern China titles and terminologies of Sufi sects like "Darvish" and "Baba" were used to be pronounced in its original Persian form. The tombs of Kubr«viya and the other Sufi sects which have been preserved in good condition are the clear signs of the perpetual influence of Sufis and their traditions in China since seventeenth century. These monuments are

¹⁵⁸ Zaytun is the transcription of "Cuong", the old Chinese name of the city, not related by the Arabic loan-word "Zaytun" (olive)

¹⁵⁹ See: Chen Dasheng et Ludvik Kalus, *Corpus d Inscriptio Arabes et Persanes en Chine*, vol 1, Paris, 1991. Guo Cherignici and Guo Qunnici, *A study on the Islamic Graves-ones in Persian and Arabic in Hangzhou, Jiexiang (China)*, 1994 (in Chinese and English)

situated on the top of a high mountain near the remote village of Dawantou, Dongxiang district of Gansu province. Presumptive grave of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qâdir Gâlânâ and a magnificent and glorious shrine of Kubrâvâ sheikh.

In the beginning of Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD) in a scroll painting which has been preserved in the central Khanqah of Kubrâviya in Lanzhou city, the building of Kubrâviya Khanqah and presumptive grave of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qâdir Gâlânâ seen in the present shape. Meanwhile it is notable that Kubrâviya are the followers of Shaikh Najm al-Dân Kubrâ but most important shrine and the holy place as they believe, is the tomb of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qâdir Gâlânâ, leader of Qâderiyya sect, one of the most important and independent sect in China. Building of such a magnificent tomb has been built in the shape of a platform on the top of a mountain hard to approach. Gardening and watering of this beautiful garden in the barren area is really a surprising and difficult task, which seems impossible without faith, sincerity and complete devotion.

The tomb of Baba Hamza Isfahânâ in the suburbs of small town Xiaonan has ancient epigraphs and scrolls in Persian showing that Baba (:Shaikh, Sufi leader) came to China from Iran during the 16th century and remained busy in preaching and promoting Sufism in Hezu and Dongxiang region. Hezu, newly named as Linxia, due to its cultural and geographical situation has been one of the most important Muslim centres in ancient China. Followers of all Islamic sects and Sufi orders lived together without fanaticism or any dispute with reciprocal respect. Due to symbiosis of the Muslims of different sects, Hezu was entitled by the Muslims of China as "small, Mecca".

Except the Sufis of different sects who had become the permanent residents of China, the vast land of China was also an old important route of travel and journey for the other Sufis. Apart from travelling traditions to visit Shaikhs or journeys around the world for spiritual refinement and purification, to acquire experience and practical knowledge, which are the basis for teaching and educating practical Sufism, one more important motive also existed for Sufis to travel around China. According to old belief of Sufis Adam after driven away from heaven, placed his first foot steps on the land of Sarandib (now Ceylon) which has been engraved on a stone. Visit and pilferage of foot impression "Qadatngali" is one of the Sufi ceremonies like Hajj as the pilgrimage of Ka'ba for the Muslims.

This tradition continued till the last century. Some Sufi leaders like Zain al-‘ybidân Shârw«nâ (1780-1837 AD) or N«yib al-Âadr Shâr«zâ (1853-1925 AD) have travelled there to see the foot place and perform their duty. They have described the adventures of journey in their writings.¹⁶⁰

Sufis and Muslims traveled to Sarandib by two routes, by sea alongwith commercial carvans on old Maritime Silk Route and secondly by road. Marine route was not pleasant for Sufis due to high expenses, dangers of voyage and lesser chance to visit different territories on the way. So they used to travel by road usually. However, any route that was selected for journey to Sarandib inevitably passed through a vast area of China. Sufi travellers aboded in shrines and Khanqahs during the journeys according to their traditions. Numerous welfare foundations also existed to serve and provide expenditures to the pilgrims. According to the writings of Ibn-i Batota, darvishes (Sufi) who travelled through China to visit Sarandib used to receive a sealed letter from the employees of Shaikh Abu-Ishaq Kazeroni's monasteries established in Iran. Devotees of Shaikh Abë Isâ«aq were instructed to serve and provide financial help to Sufis bearing the letters from the funds of Shaikh's foundation.¹⁶¹

A very rare number of the credentials of endowment and trust foundations is available in old documents which has been introduced in the historical sources of China. The journeys of saints turned into an important factor to develop and preach Sufism, to exchange ideas and thoughts and to strengthen the relations of Sufis of China with the biggest Sufi centres of Islamic world and monasteries,, particularly in Iran.

However, the strength and influx of Sufis got so increased that it resulted into the riots against King dynasty (1644 - 1911 AD) in eighteenth Century for gaining independence. In these riots, victories of Qizilbash Sufis in Iran for the sake of independence and inaugurating Safavid dynasty was a model for Chinese saints. The most important Muslim movement in Chinese

¹⁶⁰ Zain al-Abedin Shirwani, Bostan al-Siaho, Tehran, 1315, pp 305-308; Navib al-Sadr, *Taraeq al-Haqaeq*, Tehran (n.d.), vol 111, pp 523-28.

¹⁶¹ *Rahlat-o Jbn-i Baiota*, Cairo 1964, vol 1, pp. 134, 136

Turkistan (now Xinjiang) mostly shared by Khwajafarin were crushed by the famous and powerful emperor Qiang Long (r. 17-335-1796 AD).

The importance and credibility of Khwajag'n i Naqshbandâ as worthy of attention as conqueror of Turkistan Qian Long after getting hold of Turkistan and Kashghar for strengthening the foundation of his power and getting influence among the Muslims got married with the daughter of a Naqshbandâ Shaikh and carried her to Peking from Kashgar.

Khwajag'n i Naqshbandâ were Iranian and according to ancient credential and histories of Qing dynasty this lady named Patisa which is a Persian feminine name, meaning heavenly beauty, being used in Iran for the names of women till now. In the beginning like many other marriages of ancient emperors, the marriage of Qiang Long with Parisa. was also politico-strategic, that continuously changed into the passionate love. With her spiritual power and love promoting attraction, she grasped the entire empire which was one of the greatest conquerors in the history of China and in this manner fastened the influence of Muslims and the declining situation of Naqshbandis for a short span of time.¹⁶²

In Chinese tales and sources, different descriptions have been narrated and even her life has been a title of the famous' dramas of Peking Opera (Jingju). This Iranian lady was exceptionally beautiful and possessed admiring personality. According to Chinese sources, she had gloriously long black hair, magical eyes and used to wear the splendid Iranian costumes which were mark of the day in ancient China. Great poets of China as Bai Juyi (772-846 AD) and Yuan Zhen (779-831 AD) have described the beauty and grandeur of these Iranian dresses. It savoured out of her body naturally, therefore she was given the title of Xiangfei (fragrance lady). This mystic lady is known among the people by the same name in Chinese sources. The love and trust bestowed to her by the emperor of China was so strong that during this era of power and penetration of Buddhism in Chinese Court and internal policy of the government to suppress the local minorities, a special mosque was built for Xiangfei in Yuanmen yuan Palace, as she was strongly committed to

¹⁶² Chinese scholar Che Muqi has narrated the complete biography of Xiangfei with reference to Chinese sources in the following book: Che Muqi, *The Silk Road, Past and present*, Beijing, 1989, pp. 254-61.

perform prayers and to safeguard Islamic principles. Remains of this mosque are still visible in the ruins of the palace and the designed carvings of Quranic verses, sayings of Prophet and the names of his companions are exhibited in the museum of the Yuanmen yuan Palace, in Beijing (Peking).

Qiang Long dealt with the Muslims fiercely, because they played an important role in the movements and riots for independence in China. He controlled over the Muslims in performing their worships and applications and even at the beginning of his monarchy, prohibited to slaughter animals in Islamic way. The construction of new mosques and to the pilgrimage was banned as well. These are the last moments of Naqshbandis in China being in full grandeur and activity. Naqshbandi order had been dissolving into the other Sufi chains continuously since eighteenth century. Today Naqshbandâ, once being the most active Sufi school has no external existence in China. Probably it is due to getting politicized of their leaders extraordinarily, getting lost of the primary spiritual and mystical nature. Interfering the political matters, repeated movements of Khwâjagâh crushed severely by the government, resulted into the annihilation of many Naqshbandâ leaders. These bloody revolutions and riots spread over 18th and 19th century in the history of Muslims and saints in China.

Though today Naqshbandâ order in China has come to an end and should be considered as in active, but its influence on other Sufi Chains is completely visible. According to the books, theoretical texts and teaching booklets of all the Sufi orders in China these days, like Jahriya, Kubrâviya, Qâderiya and Khafiya (wrongly known as Khawfiyah in China), are the same Naqshbandâ texts with no exception.

Persian chronicles of Mawlana ‘Abd al-Ra‘mân Jâmâ, *Mathnawi* of Mawlâgâh Divân of Âfîi and *collected works* of Sa‘dâ¹⁶³ are more important while there exist theoretical differences and distinction among these schools concerning rites and ceremonies of spiritual development, the fundamentals, ideology and the world viewing.

¹⁶³ Bakhtyar Mozafar You Hanyu yi wei Posiyu de zui zao wcnxin Posiyu de zui zao, wenxin, Donkfang, Wenlue guoji sueshu yantahui lunwer ityao, Peking University Press 1991, pp. 116-27. Bakhtyar M., Abstracts of Papers, International Seminar of the Maritime Silk Route and the Islamic Culture, Quarizhou (China), 1994, p 27.

During the last years of Naqshbandâs, Jahriya sect was formed which is considered the most Chinese- transformed Islamic mysticism. Ma Mingxin, the founder of this Sect. wanted to keep this newly born sect very near to fundamentalist and pure Islam but surprisingly developed into a school mixed with miscellaneous religions and mystic thoughts and ideologies. Penetration of ideological factors of Taoism and pure ancient thoughts of Chinese mysticism are not lesser. Formalities and etiquettes of Jahriya and their intention to care for grading their leaders and safeguarding the sect has much resemblance with Ahl i Àaq in Iran. This sect is named as Jahriya as they recite the supplications with the loud voice (Jahr) while 'Naqshbandiya and Khafiya which is the most purified offspring of Naqshbandiya in China, recite silently in their heart.

Ma Mingxing The founder and leader of Jahriya had travelled during the years 1760-1780 AD through Arab territories with the objective of gaining Islamic knowledge and research into the orders of mysticism. In 17th century, after the formation of Shâ'a in Iran by Safavid dynasty, the communication of religious and mystic schools of Iran had come to an end with the traditional religious of eastern neighbouring lands to Iran.

Life history of Ma Mingxin is mixed with both the reality and different myths like the lives of mystic leaders and sages mostly. Jahriya sect was a source of a number of great religious and movements in China, particularly in Gansu Province which caused many difficulties for (Ding dynasty (1644-1911 AD), basic stimulant of these movements was the problem of Muslims Identification and cultural formation in China. whether to be Chinese and then Muslim or a Muslim of China facing the other cultures with respect to their land.

The Jahriya played an important role in the history of Islam in China at that time and afterwards. The sect's followers maintain their own beliefs and rites, which include elements of Iranian mysticism. Followers, however, are very secretive about their beliefs and it is difficult to describe them accurately.¹⁶⁴ Social and political circumstances have compounded secrecy. It

¹⁶⁴ See: Zhang Cheitvzii, Xinfing shi, GuanozItou, 1991 (in Chinese, printed 360 copies only). The author was not Muslim, accepted Islam and then joined the Jahriya sect, mentions on page 268 that adherents have kept the writings of their leaders in manuscript

is nevertheless significant, from a cultural and bibliographical perspective that their important texts, in manuscript form are written in a language which is a mixture of Persian and Arabic and is not easily understandable to non-followers of the sect. Thus the content of the texts is only conveyed to adherents.

The most important text of the Jahriya, of which numerous copies are owned by the sect's followers, is *Mukbaminas* by Shaykh MuĀammad Tabadkani ñēsâ Khur«s«nâ one of the grrreat Naqshbandâ leaders (d.1486 AD). The author has incorporated the famous Arabic *qaĀâda* of Sharaf al-Dân BēĀârâ, known as *Al-Burdab*, in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, into a certain style of Persian poetry called *Mukbammās* (quintuple). The author has used the version of *Al-Burdab* given by MuĀammad Jakl al-Dân Khujandâ Fargh«nâ as far as the order of the original *qaĀâda* is concerned. This text is considered to be the sacred book of this sect. Every follower of the Jahriya has to read this *Mukbammās* in a particular ritual manner. Hence there are numerous copies of this text in China and a printed version has been made available.

A part from the *Mukbammās*, the following books are widely read and respected by the followers of the sect: *Div«n* of Ā«fiĀ; *the Mathnawi* of Mawlavâ; *Asbi“at al-lama‘at* by ‘Abd al-RaĀm«n J«mâ; *Tafsâr-i man«hib-i ‘jliyah* of Mulla Āusayn W«iz K«shifâ (d. 910/1505) which is known as *Tafsâr Husaynâ* among Chinese Muslims. These titles are found in MS. form throughout China and, in particular, among the followers of the Jahriya sect.

Another credible Sufi sect is Q«dariya. The center of Q«dariya Shaikh is in Linxia city of Gausu Province. The tomb of Shaikh Abē ‘Abdullah (d.1679 A. D.) a great saint in the Lariguzhou city, Sichuan Province, is one if the sacred place of Qadariya in China. Shaikh Abē ‘Abdullah was burried in his own monastery according to his will. This monastery is known as "Masjid Baba" and considered as a holy place of Pilgrimage by the Muslims and Sufis of China. Followers of Q«dariya sect gather to celebrate oil a particular day in a congregation every year to hold a grand process.

form, and have copied them vigorously. They do not, however, reveal the content of the texts to non-followers. Zhang Chergizhi, the author of the book is Professor of Japanese and a famous writer in China.

With reference to many rites and ceremonies Kubraviya which is to be explained more, is not much different from Qadiriya. Khafiya order, wrongly known as Khamfiyah in China, is the most pure surviving element of Naqshbandi China but it is not active as before is followed by a few these days.

An active Sufi sect in China is Kubraviya. The residence of Shaikh is located in a big Khanqah in Lanzhou city, Gansu Province. Kubraviya possesses many Khanqah, strong organization in Gansu and other provinces of Muslim population followed by a large number of people. Their central grand Khanqah is situated in a remote village, Dawantou. As pointed earlier the model tomb of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Gilani has been built and with respect to some special days and occasions the followers of Kubraviya and even the other sects gather there to celebrate particular ceremonies. The most important is the birth anniversary of Shaikh. A great deal of manuscripts and Persian letters of saints are found which have been introduced by me in the Survey of Islamic Manuscripts in China. (under Lanzhou and Dawantou). Kubraviya hold *Sam'at*, spiritual musical meetings, with the permission of Shaikh. In 1993) A.D while staying among them for some weeks, I witnessed these enthusiastic meetings in the presence of Shaikh. These meetings memories us the realistic ceremonies of *Sam'at*, (mystical dance and music) of earlier Sufis, which differ entirely from those being performed and exhibited in a demoralized way now-a-days far from mystic spirit. All the songs sung in the Kubraviya's musical meetings and other ceremonies, termed and known as "Qawl" and "Qawwâdâ" is in Persian and musical melody is also Iranian. Gist of these verses is to resort to twelve Imams and seek help from sacred personalities (Walis) and the great saints. Existence of these Shi'a elements in the rites and songs of Kubraviya who are the followers of Hanafi sect is worthy of attention and has particular arguments but this discussion does not spare now.

Shaikh of Kubraviya after seclusion for there recurring cycles, having fasted for ninety days and secluded in a particular cave in Dawantou's Mountain, wears the Kherqah (gown) in the gathering of all the followers, holding grand ceremonies and special rites, all over China. The gown which is a sign of leadership for many Sufi order is used to be handed over by the former Shaikhs to the later Ones.

Shaikh MuÁammad Ibr«him Zhang contemporary leader of Kubr«viya told me that Qalandariya is also attached with Kubr«viya monastery. During my long stay in China, have not seen follower of Qalandariya sect and how far they have secured their identity in China, is not known.

At the end, I am much interested in highlighting something about the historical and social factors of the continuation of Sufis in China till now. How a small minority in a big society of entirely different social and ideological systems, in spite of difficulties, classes and Suppressions has verily safeguarded her identity and existence and remained stern. It is not a problem to be solved easily and looked over but suffices the best just to mention and propounded here.

What cannot be helped without saying is the peculiarity of Persian language as the most important factor of existence and identification for Sufi orders in China. As pointed earlier, official and cultural language of Chinese Muslims particularly Sufis, since the preaching of Islam in China and beginning of Sufi sects, has been Persian. All the texts and teaching booklets common among them were also in Persian.¹⁶⁵ In this way, continuity and permanence of these sects owes to identity and importance of Persian among Sufis. Chinese language converted into the cultural mid mystical Language of Sufis equals the conversion of their thoughts and cosmology and getting lost of their actuality and identity. For historical experience has proved the inability of Chinese language as being the interpreter of subtle and special beliefs and ideas of Islam.

Therefore, the core of the Hu Dengzhou Islamic traditional education which established at the end of 19th century and based on learning Islamic theology and translating religious texts in Chinese did not succeed in its objectives.

The basic reason is that while translating Islamic texts from Persian or Arabic, due to the Chinese background Buddhist and Taoist diction and terminology inflects its cultural and practical impression. In this way spiritual

¹⁶⁵ Bakhtyar Mozafar, Sadi zai xifang werixtie zhong de chonggo diwei, Guowai wenrue, 1, 1993, pp 70-79. Nigxia zhexue shehui kexue yanjiusuo, Qing dai zhongguo Yisilanjia lunji, Yinchuan, 1981, pp. 340-369.

factors of Islamic thought-the view- points and Buddhist expressions probe into the mind which are different from the real thinking and objectives. It is apparent from the Chinese translations of Islamic texts and sacred scriptures completely, that particular Islamic culture and cosmology is covered under the reflection and synthesis of Tao-Buddhist style and imagery.